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december/january 2011/12

From the editor

Sadly, this is my last edition as editor of Sonning Common Magazine. I would like to thank all our readers who have supported both me and the magazine, either through contributing articles and photographs or by providing useful feedback on content and design.

Also, thank you to the magazine committee, our excellent designer, Kevin Taplin, and all of our advertisers for their on-going support.

I have thoroughly enjoyed developing the magazine over the past two and a half years, with the help of the committee and the wider community, and wish the magazine every success in the future.

Although I'm stepping down as editor, I intend to stay on the committee and continue to be involved with the magazine.

We're hoping there is another potential editor out there who is interested in taking on the role. It is a great way to get involved with the community and very rewarding (see the note from the chairman on page 7).

In this edition we have some eye-catching art from the children of Kidmore End Primary School (In Focus); an expanded Youth Zone; news from around the community; and letters on page 21.

We also have some top tips on keeping your home secure over the festive period. Check out Noticeboard on pages 10 and 11 and Diary Dates to see what's going on.

Wishing you all a fantastic Christmas and New Year celebration.



ROS VARNE Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

p.s...

Sonning Common Magazine is on sale at the village library in Grove Road for £1.50 a copy. Annual subscriptions are available for £15. Contact Geoffrey Adams. Email: chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org Phone: 0118 972 2134

Magazine contributions may be posted to: 1 Woodlands Road, Sonning Common RG4 9TD.

WHILE EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO ENSURE THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION PRINTED IN THIS MAGAZINE, THE EDITOR AND THE PUBLISHER CANNOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF ERRORS THAT OCCUR.



sonningcommon
magazine

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COVER IMAGE

Deck the halls

Wreath by Sue Hedges, Sonning Common WI.
Photo by Ros Varne

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COPY DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 01 FEBRUARY 2012



Get set to go digital

Most homes in the village will be switching to a digital TV signal on 8 and 22 February.

This two-phased change-over is for households which receive BBC South and Meridian. It will mean that after 22 February those people with appropriate TV sets should be able to get High Definition (HD) programmes.

Those households which receive London transmissions will make the switch on 4 and 18 April.

People who receive their television signal through a satellite dish need take no action.

However, those who don't will need to retune all television sets in their homes after the change-over dates, even if they already receive digital channels.

Digital UK, the organisation responsible for managing the change-over, has produced a leaflet with guidance on how to re-tune television sets, which you may have already received.

How do you know whether you are receiving digital TV? Well, if you receive BBC3, BBC4, and ITV2 and a host of other channels, then you have digital.

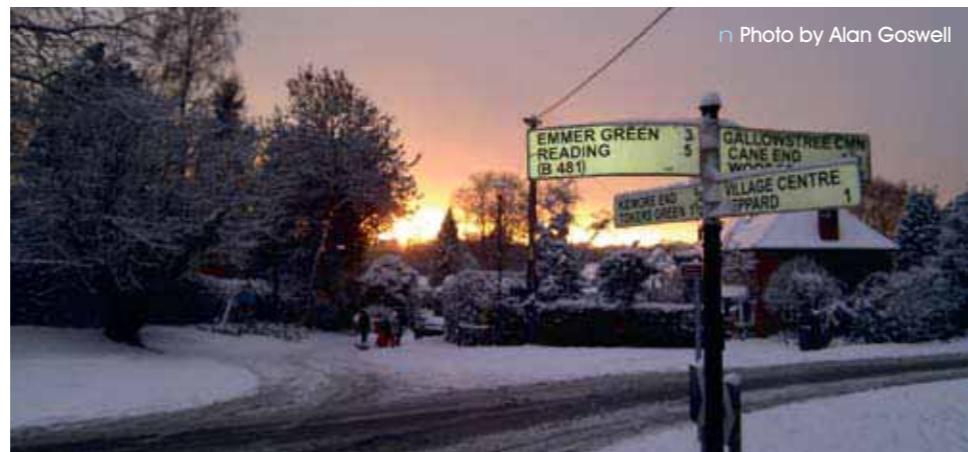
If you only get BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel 4 and Channel 5 then you are receiving an analogue signal and this signal will be turned off in 2012.

As the change-over to a digital TV signal approaches there will be a message on the TV warning of the need to take action.

Analogue viewers will need to convert to digital, either by acquiring a set-top box, which costs between £25 and £120, or by changing their TV set.

They may also need to change their aerials at a cost of £60 to £180 from a registered digital installer.

Help is available with the switch-over for those over 75 and for people on certain benefits. For more information visit www.digitaluk.co.uk or phone 0800 408 5900. n



n Photo by Alan Goswell

Plan to combat heavy snow

After two winters that saw Sonning Common almost grind to a halt, the parish council has devised a snow plan to help deal with heavy weather.

Sonning Common Parish Council has purchased its own supplies of salt and equipment and wants to work with residents to make the village safer.

The aim is to ensure that the core shopping areas, medical facilities, primary school and library are safer to get to on foot. Once the core area has been treated, a wider area may be considered for treatment. Oxfordshire County Council will be responsible for gritting only the main Peppard Road and the bus route through the village.

Councillor Dirk Jones said: "It still remains the responsibility of all property owners to ensure safe walking conditions between the pavement and their front door.

"While the snow plan is essentially a well-resourced DIY plan it will rely on a, 'Yes, we can', spirit. It's our village, we now have the resources, so let's combine our efforts to make it safer for everybody this winter." n

For more information on the snow plan contact:

Councillor Dirk Jones 0118 972 2165 / Parish Clerk Philip Collings 0118 972 3616

Parish council update

n The hand-weeding of the village has now been completed.

n A new bench has been erected at the bus stop in Peppard Road and the parish council is investigating the provision of a new bus shelter at Essex Way.

n The parish council is to investigate the economics of installing solar panels in the village hall.

n Salt and equipment for dealing with heavy snow has arrived and will be stored at the village hall.

n Fencing and gates for all the play areas have now been installed.

n The parish council is to enforce the removal of A-frame notices, in response to complaints from residents.

n With the help of a grant from the parish council, The Village Gardeners have created a newly-planted flower bed outside One-stop store, designed by professional landscape artist, councillor Gail Noble.

n Oxfordshire County Council has finally agreed to give the Youth Club at Chiltern Edge School a full grant, as a direct result of an appeal by the parish council.

n The parish council wishes to congratulate councillor Douglas Kedge on his appointment to the Standards Board of South Oxfordshire District Council. This body investigates complaints made against councillors and advises councillors on the Code of Conduct.

COUNCILLOR CHRISSIE PHILLIPS-TILBURY
Sonning Common Parish Council

Coffee morning success

Two coffee mornings in the village have raised more than £1,000 for Macmillan Cancer Care. Linda Webb and June Fisher hosted an event in the village hall which made a fantastic £750.

There were plenty of goodies to entice passers-by. On sale were cakes, books, plants, toys and clothes and the side room was turned into a small coffee shop.

Village singing group Nottakwire entertained passers-by while several ladies did demonstrations of lace and crochet-making.

Linda and Jean said the event far exceeded their expectations and turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable and worthwhile occasion.

In Kennylands Road Penny Snowden and Leena Wisely were thrilled to raise £400 from their coffee morning.

Again, a lot of hard work ensured a great atmosphere and there were many goods on sale as well as delicious cakes and coffee.

Both sets of organisers commented on the great community spirit evident at their events and the generosity of local people.



Ladies at the Kennylands Road coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Care.
Photo by the Henley Standard

Fun day was a big hit

A fun day, aimed at strengthening community relations in Sonning Common, was hailed as a great success.

The event was for the residents of Ashford Avenue, Pages Orchard and Farm Close. It was organised jointly by residents, NOMAD youth and community project, the Rainbow Children's Centre and local housing association Soha.

"The biggest question on everybody's lips was, 'When are we going to do something like this again?' n



n Enjoying the community fun day in Pages Orchard.

Preparing for Spring

A group of Chiltern Edge School students joined forces with the Village Gardeners recently to plant some Spring bulbs. Lewis Clifford and Ashley Griffiths are pictured hard at work outside the school. n



Looking spick and span

The village hall management committee has been busy having the village hall spruced up, ready for Christmas.

They have had the floor professionally cleaned and polished and have bought a new Christmas tree.

Local schools regularly display their artwork in the hall. Currently on show is *Visions of God* by year 3 at Kidmore End Primary School.

Committee chairwoman Sue Frayling-Cork is always keen to hear from other individuals or groups who are interested in displaying art in the hall. Phone: 0118 972 2312. n

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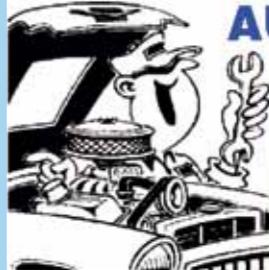
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Football club ball raises £9,000

Rotherfield United Football Club held its first ever All Hallows' Ball recently in the impressive surroundings of the Great Hall at Shiplake College.

More than 100 guests were treated to a sparkling reception, three-course dinner and live band.

The evening's auction was a huge success, with high quality donations from several local businesses in Sonning Common and the surrounding area.

A fine time was had by all and the final figure raised was in excess of £9,000. The money will go towards the building of a new clubhouse.

The club, which was founded in 1973, has over 250 registered players and recently achieved FA Standard Charter Development Club Status. [n](#)

Pictured at the All Hallows' Ball are, from left, Caroline Jordan, Heather Mullin (RUFC fundraising officer), Bonnie Emmett, Christine Atkinson and Helen Beville.



Public inquiry on housing proposal

A public inquiry into the application by TA Fisher to build 50 new homes to the rear of Kennylands Road will be held in early January.

It will take place in Crowmarsh Gifford and be led by an independent inspector, Roger Tucker.

Residents' representatives, who are opposed to the site being developed, will be speaking against the application, as will a member of the parish council's planning committee.

Meanwhile, the planning application to build 80 new houses on Lea Meadow was withdrawn again in early November before South Oxfordshire District Council had reached a decision. [n](#)

Library awaits its fate

The future of Sonning Common Library is to be decided at a meeting of Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet members on Monday, 12 December.

The council is currently proposing to keep Sonning Common's library open with access to the county's library infrastructure and book stocks.

However, it is planning to fund professional staff for just one-third of the library's opening hours and expects volunteers to fill the gaps.

If this proposal goes ahead, Sonning Common would be in the third and lowest tier of library provision in the county.

The Friends of Sonning Common Library believe the proposals are unfair and will fail to meet the needs of our community.

As part of the public consultation into the future of the county's library service, the Friends submitted a 16-page document to the council, along with a public petition, arguing the case for a professionally-run service to be retained by Sonning Common.

The key arguments were that the library is at the heart of school and community life; it is an essential part of educational provision in the area; and a large and developing village requires a properly-resourced library.

The Friends would like to see budgetary cuts being shared among all of Oxfordshire's 43 libraries. Failing that, they are urging the council to move Sonning Common up to the second tier of provision where it would have two-thirds, as opposed to one-third, professional staff support. [n](#)

Come and make it your own

The village's youth club, at Chiltern Edge School, has been relaunched as ClubSC with the help of new funding.

The new youth leaders, Lesley Mather and Natalie Guppy, know that the club's success will depend on members knowing what they want to happen at the club and then getting involved in everything on offer.

According to Lesley: "It's your club with your ideas. It's your place to be – make it your own."

ClubSC is now open for 10 to 13-year-olds on Wednesdays and for 14 to 16-year-olds on Thursday evenings, from 7 to 9pm, for 50 weeks per year.

It provides a safe and secure environment to socialise and make new friends while listening to music, playing pool and visiting the tuck shop - all for just 50p per night.

The reopening of the youth centre has been achieved through the hard work of a committee of volunteers who have managed to secure £24,350 funding for one year only from the Big Society fund.

This is for start-up costs, including the re-decorating and re-furbishment of the club, and will also cover the employment of a youth manager and support worker for one year.

Sonning Common Parish Council has allocated a £4,500 grant for the next two years. Chiltern Edge Community Association (CECA) has given

£500 and will match fund any future fund-raising activities, up to a further £500.

It will be a challenge to raise the level of funding required to keep the club open in future years and the new management committee will be looking for financial support from local businesses and organisations.

To volunteer to help run sessions at the club or to support fund-raising initiatives, please contact: Lesley Mather at clubsc@hotmail.com.uk

Read more about ClubSC on Facebook: ClubSCsonningcommon

Email: clubsc@hotmail.com.uk



[n](#) Lesley Mather and Natalie Guppy

We need a new editor. Is it for you?

After two and a half years as editor of Sonning Common Magazine, Ros Varnes has decided to step down. So, the committee is searching for someone to take on this important role in our community.

Is it something that appeals to you? If so, please contact Geoff Adams, magazine chairman, on 0118 972 2134 or e-mail geoffrey.adams5@btopenworld.com or drop a note in to 1 Woodlands Road.

What does this voluntary job involve? It involves planning and producing each issue, in consultation with members of an editorial group and the professional designer.

The editor decides on the focus of each issue and commissions and collates articles and photographs and edits all contributions. Writing copy is also an important part of the job.

The editorial group, chaired by the editor, provides excellent support in planning,

writing and collecting contributions. This group could be expanded and assistant editors appointed, if the new editor so desired.

The magazine is published six times a year and its circulation is approximately 1,900.

Sonning Common Magazine is a not for profit organisation and its aim is to provide information, entertainment and interest for the residents of Sonning Common.

It is neither party political nor a campaigning organisation. Rather it seeks to provide balanced commentary on current village issues and information about future plans.

The editor is appointed by the committee and then becomes a full member of the committee.

Please give serious thought to taking on this very important role in our community. [n](#)

GEOFFREY ADAMS
Chairman, Sonning Common Magazine



New distribution manager for magazine

The magazine committee is delighted to welcome Helen Gavin as the new distribution manager for the magazine.

Mother-of-three Helen lives in Woodlands Road and is keen to get to know more people in the village.

A new distribution manager was required since Geoff Adams is now magazine chairman.

Anyone with queries or concerns about distribution should now contact Helen (see details on page one). [n](#)

Sonning Common Magazine is on the web!

We have taken our first step to introduce an electronic version of the magazine - to supplement, not replace, paper copies.

Electronic copies of the magazine, from June/July 2010 to December/January 2012, can now be accessed by people all over the world who have an interest in Sonning Common.

Eventually we hope to develop the web site to deliver more up-to-date information than is possible with a bi-monthly publication and to allow people to add comments and suggestions. However, for the moment, we will have just copies of recent editions.

The site can be accessed at:
www.sonningcommonmagazine.org

Please inform your friends and relatives if you think they will be interested in this latest development and let us know what you think.

Email:
chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org

Phone:
Geoff Adams on 0118 972 2134 [n](#)





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Phone: 0845 3510646

The 2012 Spring term brochure from Reading WEA (Workers' Educational Association) is also available.

Phone: 0118 946 4137



Following in the footsteps of the Incas

Sonning Common Primary School teacher Judith Walmsley is to trek 40km along the Inca trail in Peru to raise money for charity.

The mother-of-three has chosen the Sue Ryder Hospice at Nettlebed as her nominated charity.

She said: "There are so many areas that need ongoing financial support at Sue Ryder so please consider sponsoring me at: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Judith.Walmsley>.

Library news

The library will hold a special Christmas Storytime on Saturday, 17 December at 10am with seasonal stories, crafts and refreshments.

The library will close for Christmas at 12.30pm on 24 December and re-open on Wednesday, 4 January at 2pm.

We'd like to wish everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and a hopeful 2012 - and thanks to everyone for their support over the past, very difficult, year.

Rosemary Dunstan
Library manager

Put on your dancing shoes

Would you consider taking up circle dancing as a hobby? Sonning Common's circle dancing group is keen to attract new members.

As its name suggests, circle dancing is dancing in a circle to music of enormous variety. Many of the dances come from Europe, the Balkans, or Israel and some come from South America.

But there are also new dances, choreographed to pop or even classical music. Ros Jennings, from the group, said: "There are no mistakes, only variations! By the time we end the session there is a great feeling of well-being and inner peace. If you would like to join us, do come along - no partner necessary - just comfortable shoes."

The group meets every first Sunday of the month at Christ the King Church Hall, in Sedgewell Road, from 3.30pm to 5pm. The first session is free.

For more information, please contact Ros Jennings on 01491 874220.

Carols in the village hall

Village singing group Nottakwire will retell original work by Elaine Williams, co-founder of Nottakwire.

There will also be Christmas carols with audience participation - words provided.

Performances will take place on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 December in Sonning Common Village Hall at 3pm.

Mince pies and hot drinks are included in the ticket price of £5 per adult and £2 per child under 13. Tickets are available from group members, Occasions on Wood Lane or the box office on 0118 972 3586.



Peppard Revels have some dates to share for next year.

The following film nights are planned:

Friday 20 January
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE

Friday 17 February
FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL

Friday 23 March
MADNESS OF KING GEORGE

Doors to Peppard War Memorial Hall open at 7.15pm. Tickets, priced £10, for supper in a bowl, a glass of wine and the film, are available from Geoff Pitcher on 0118 972 3050. See www.peppardrevels.org.uk or email peppardrevels@mac.com for further information.

Peppard Revels on Peppard Common will take place on the first weekend in June 2012 - the Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend - with Peppard Olympics, films, dinner and a combined church service.

Run for charity

The annual Lions' 10k charity road run will take place on Sunday 8 January in Woodcote.

Sir John Madejski is due to start the event, organised by Goring, Woodcote & District Lions Club, and present prizes to the winners.

As with previous years, the race will start at 10.30am between the entrance to Langtree School and Woodcote Village Hall, Reading Road, Woodcote RG8 0RA.

Free hot drinks will be provided for all runners and there will be water stations en-route and at the finish. Limited changing and toilet facilities are available in the village hall.

A team from St John Ambulance will be providing first aid cover.

Entrants must be at least 15-years-old. Details and entry forms are available to download from [www.lions-gwd.org.uk](http://lions-gwd.org.uk)

The entry fee is £12 when paid in advance (£10 for affiliated club runners). The late registration fee is £15, payable before 10am on race day, if space allows.



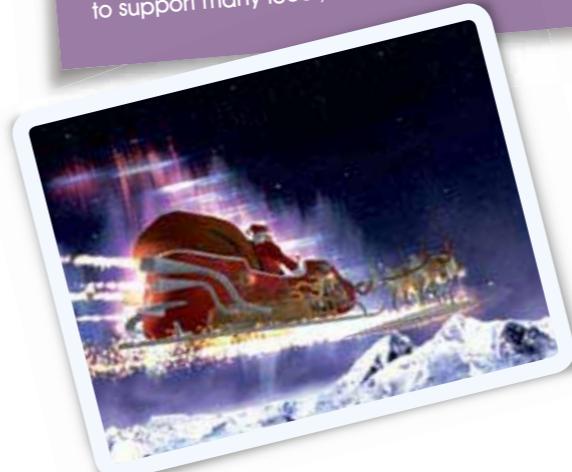
Don't miss Santa

Father Christmas is coming back for his annual tour of Sonning Common with the local Lions group.

He will be touring the village on Thursday 8, Friday 9 and Wednesday 14 December between 7pm and 9pm. Look out for his distinctive sleigh playing Christmas carols.

Jon Solman, from The Lions Club of Goring, Woodcote and District, said: "Last year Father Christmas's travels were curtailed by extremely bad and icy road conditions. However, this year the Lions have prepared Santa's sleigh for his 30th successive tour around nominated local villages."

Donations from the street collections will be used to support many local, charitable causes.



Have festive fun at the Christmas lunch

Preparations are well underway for this year's Sonning Common Christmas Lunch to be held again in the village hall on Christmas Day.

The lunch is for people who are on their own or for couples who find all that shopping and cooking a bit much. Tickets, costing £10 a head, are available from Jill Vallis on 0118 972 3251 or Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury on 0118 972 1058. Help will be available with transportation, if required.

Fancy treading the boards?

Woodley Light Operatic Society is looking for new members to take part in Jekyll & Hyde - the musical, to be staged in June 2012.

Rehearsals will take place on Tuesday evenings at Rivermead School in Woodley between 7.30pm and 10pm. They begin on 3 January.

For more information see the website: www.wlos.co.uk



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VISIONS OF God

Photos: PETER VARNES

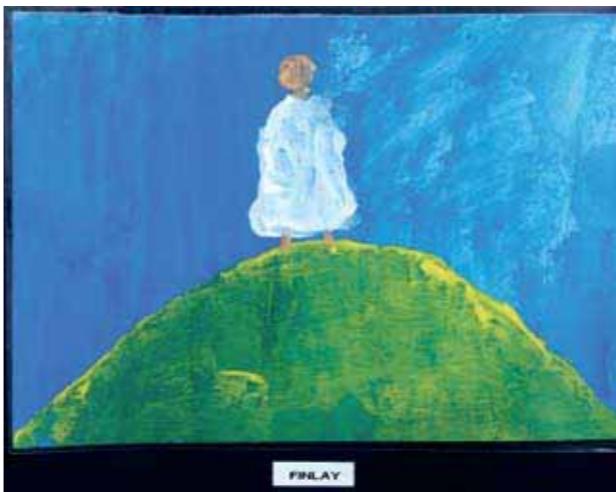
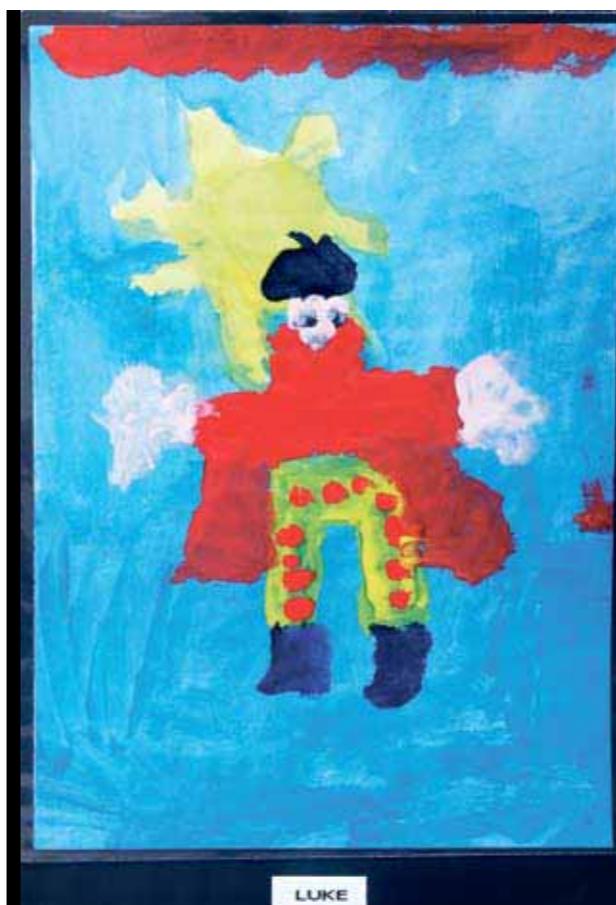
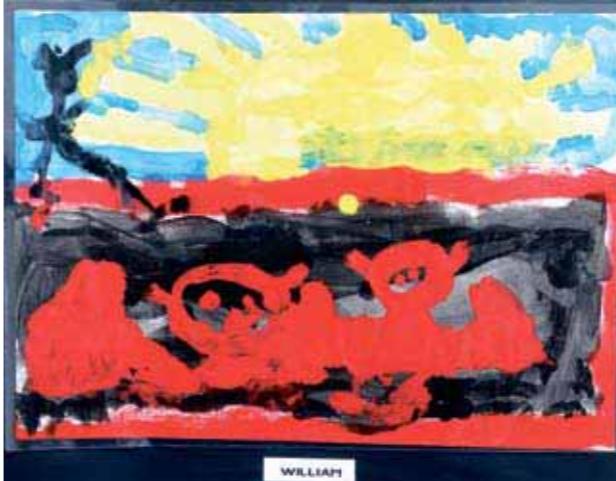
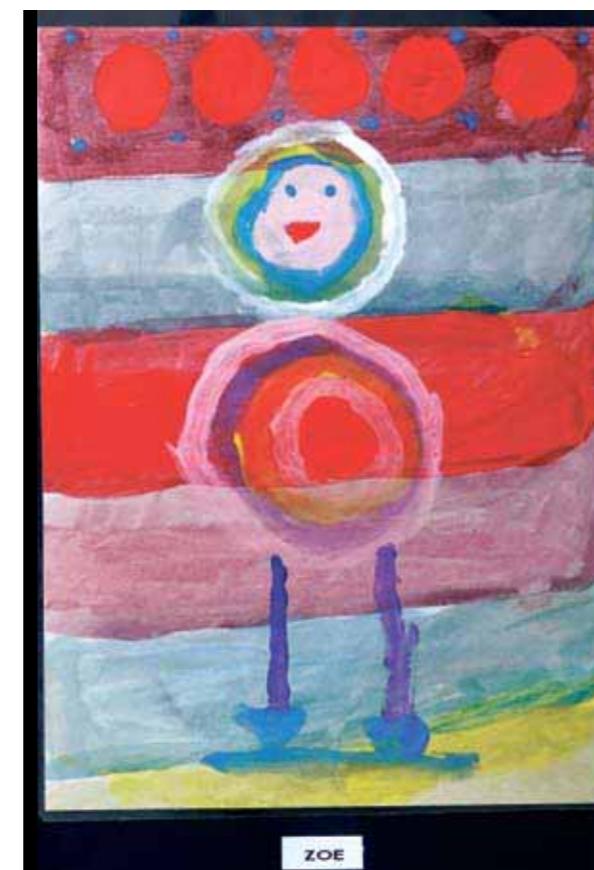


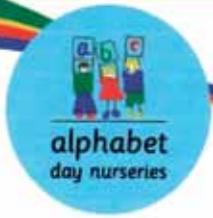
As part of an innovative project, year three children at Kidmore End Primary School were asked to paint their idea of how God might look. And here are the stunning results.

Visions of God, by children aged seven and eight, is currently on display in the village hall.

Each painting is different. Many are abstracts. Some include figures. But all are painted in bright, joyful colours.

Class teacher Richard Stainthorp said: "It was a fascinating exercise. A lot of what the children produced was completely unexpected but they all had a rational explanation for how they came up with their ideas." □





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Security tips for Christmas

While the Christmas period promotes goodwill and the giving and receiving of presents for some, it provides an extra incentive for taking for others. Thieves and burglars often see the holiday season as an ideal time to do a different type of Christmas shopping.

Here are a few tips to ensure your home and possessions are kept secure over the Christmas and New Year period.

1 If you have a Christmas tree that's visible from outside, don't display wrapped presents underneath it until Christmas Eve, and then only if the house is occupied.

2 Burglars know all the places to look for hidden door keys near the front entrance, so, don't hide spare keys under doormats, rocks, flowerpots or on door or window ledges. Instead, give a spare key to a trusted neighbour.

3 Keep your curtains and blinds closed at night. If you are going out for the evening invest in some inexpensive timers, connected to lights, to give the impression that someone is at home.

4 If you want exterior Christmas lights do not use an extension lead that prevents a window or exterior door from being fully closed and locked. Install an exterior socket, if there is no other secure option.

5 Secure garages and sheds as these are often targeted by thieves looking for bikes, tools or garden tools. Also make sure that any garden tools, ladders etc. are not left lying around where they could be used to force an entry into your home.

6 Deter would-be criminals by using a motion sensor floodlight, or even outdoor Christmas lights, to highlight the exterior of your home and make approaching it too conspicuous for a burglar.

7 If you are going away over the Christmas period then plan ahead. Cancel any regular deliveries. If delivered mail can be seen through a glass door panel then screen it or arrange for a trusted neighbour to remove it. You could arrange for a friend or neighbour to park on your driveway to give the impression that someone is at home.

8 Don't leave descriptive messages on your answer phone saying you're away for the holiday. Burglars love to hear they have plenty of time to break-in!

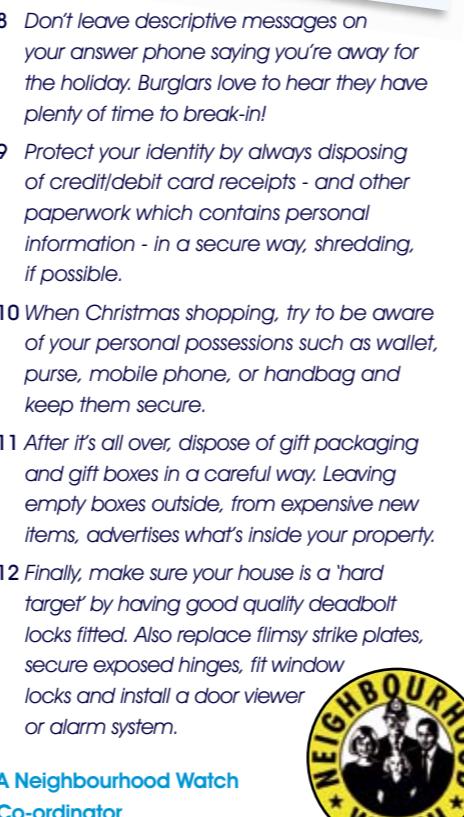
9 Protect your identity by always disposing of credit/debit card receipts - and other paperwork which contains personal information - in a secure way, shredding, if possible.

10 When Christmas shopping, try to be aware of your personal possessions such as wallet, purse, mobile phone, or handbag and keep them secure.

11 After it's all over, dispose of gift packaging and gift boxes in a careful way. Leaving empty boxes outside, from expensive new items, advertises what's inside your property.

12 Finally, make sure your house is a 'hard target' by having good quality deadbolt locks fitted. Also replace flimsy strike plates, secure exposed hinges, fit window locks and install a door viewer or alarm system.

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Don't mess up the dog bag bin

The public-minded citizens who organise the Millennium Field provide a box of plastic bags for the use of dog walkers so that dog faeces can be collected and not left strewn across the grass, adding, to quote the late Peter Sellers, neither wealth nor beauty to our nation.

I, (being less public-spirited or I would supply my own), use them myself for my rather lavish hound.

Some weeks ago a person left a banana skin in the box, obviously not having the energy to walk 50 yards to the proper bin.

On a later occasion the remains of someone's lunch were deposited. Then, not to be outdone, someone else poured a sticky soft drink into the box, ruining the bags, or, at least, making them extremely unpleasant to use.

I dream of punishments like flogging through the fleet - only nowadays we don't even have a fleet! [n](#)

PETER DAYTON
Kennylands Rd

We would welcome new members

Chiltern Edge Orchestra meets on Tuesdays during term time at Chiltern Edge School.

We are a full orchestra, but are currently short of upper strings (violins) and would welcome new members. We operate in a relaxed environment, seeking to encourage and give our members playing experience in serious, and occasionally, light orchestral music. We perform two informal concerts a year.

Our conductor, Fa Fa Jin, has been a professional cellist and teacher and we have a new leader, Tony Short. Tony has worked with major symphony, opera and ballet orchestras and was a full-time member of the Ulster Orchestra in Belfast for many years.

He is also an adult education tutor in music and a violin teacher at Reading University. The strings, therefore, have expert support from Tony.

Please get in touch if you would like more information.
 Ruth Winchester 0118 9722 164 www.chilternedgeorchestra.org.uk [n](#)

RUTH WINCHESTER
Chiltern Edge Orchestra

Reminiscing about the past

**I started my education at the primary school
 then moved on to Henley Grammar School from
 1953 til 1958.**

I was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne but my parents decided to move south to be near relatives, including my paternal grandfather who owned a house in Wood Lane named Tritonville.

My father worked for the Thames Valley Traction Company. I remember how when there was a bus strike we had a lift into Reading in a Rolls Royce!

The shops at that time included Brinds and Brewers (butchers), Kilbys (now the Co-operative), Heath and Watkins and the Post Office where Mr Nickless was in charge. My mother helped there in the background. The doctors were Clay and Hepill. Kews were the bakers. Ellis and Heading delivered milk and Joseys, coal.

My brother Frank was puzzled there were no swans when Swans Garage opened in Peppard Road.

At school Mr Miller was head. He had a son named James. Other staff included Mrs Clayton, Mrs Fisher, Mrs Lockwood and Mr Luke. Happy days.

I am still in touch with Anne de Gruchy (now Finch) who lived with her parents in Kennylands Road, and Judith Coy (née Wadley) still living in Crowsley Way with husband Harry.

I also remember Miss Bonham Carter who lived in Woodlands Road and rode a trike, the Hayden family, including 10 boys, and our neighbour Mrs Webb and son Harry. [n](#)

EVA ALLEN (NÉE BAKER)
Eva lived at 18 Grove Road from 1945 until 1961

Lea Meadow development in question

Despite the chronic economic circumstances and severe shortage of homes, South Oxfordshire District Council has buckled to pressure from some existing homeowners and sought to refuse permission for 80 houses (including 32 affordable houses) on paddock land at Sonning Common.

This is despite the fact that the council has agreed to build 1,154 houses shared between the 13 larger villages in south Oxfordshire.

Sonning Common is one of the largest villages with a population of about 4,000 people, only 89 of whom have objected to this application.

All other possible development sites around the village are either within or adjoining the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty so if houses are not built on Lea Meadow they will need to be built elsewhere and spoil the landscape around the village.

The landowner and his advisers will now be discussing the future development of the site with the council. [n](#)

STEWART LILLY
**Stewart Lilly Associates
 (agent for the landowner)**



Tom Fort

MARMALADE

Sometime next month (January) a distinctive citrus fruit will arrive from sunnier climes in our shops and supermarkets. The appearance of the Seville orange is a signal for the nation's marmalade-makers to root out giant preserving pans and outsize wooden stirring spoons, gather up jam jars, pull on aprons and get to work.

Anyone who knows anything about how to organise a decent breakfast will tell you that commercial marmalade – with its measly shavings of orange peel as well as the inevitable and dreaded setting agent pectin

– simply will not do. As for the words 'golden' and 'shred', the combination is enough to give me nightmares.

Marmalade has long been a crucial component of my breakfast. For most of my life I relied upon my mother to supply it. Come January she would drop everything else and her house would be filled with the rich, astringent smell of boiling fruit.

Then, a few years ago, came an appalling blow. She announced that, at the age of 91, she was too old to continue. In a moving ceremony, she wrote out her recipe, handed over to me the

pan, spoon and funnel, and made it clear that from now on our roles were reversed.

It was, and remains, a heavy responsibility. I have to supply 30 or so pots for myself and my immediate family, and about 20 or so for my mother, still spreading it on thickly at 96.

When you are making marmalade, everything else – children, wife, work, even fishing – must take second place. If everything goes well, and the result is firm enough not to run but soft enough to quiver when you shake the pot, a deep sense of fulfilment possesses you. If not,



then all is rage and despair.

No, I'm not going to pass on the recipe (two tips though: don't waste your money on preserving sugar because granulated is fine, and add a large spoonful of black treacle to the boil to give a rich, dark hue). And, no, it's no good asking me for some. It's just too precious. □

Christmas church services

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Monday 26 December:
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Friday 16 December:
Service of carols and readings, St John's, 7.30pm

Saturday 24 December:
Christingle, Christ the King, 4.30pm
Midnight Mass, St John's, 11pm

Sunday 25 December:

Family Eucharist with carols, Christ the King, 9.30am

Family Eucharist with carols, St John's, 10.30am

The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held between 18 and 25 January.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD

Sunday, 4 December:

An Advent sequence of readings and music, 6.30pm

Saturday 24 December:

Nativity play and carols, 5.30pm
Holy Communion, 9pm

Sunday 25 December:

Holy Communion, 9am
Six lessons and carols, 11am

SPRINGWATER CHURCH, ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD

Sunday 11 December:

Morning service including the children's Nativity play, 10.30am

Sunday 18 December:

Carol service and Christingle, 10.30am

Sunday 25 December:

Short Christmas Day service, 10.30am



CHURCH bloopers

These extracts appeared in church magazines or were announced in church services:

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

Miss Charlene Mason sang, I will not pass this way again, giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

At the evening service tonight the sermon topic will be, What Is Hell? Come early and listen to our choir practice.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the church help.

Low self esteem support group will meet on Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5pm - prayer and meditation to follow.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

WE'VE GOT IT GOING ON

REPORTED BY: Fern Pocock, Matt Whitfield, Maya Rees, Suria Warren and Fred Newbold from Year 6

VALUES

We have five values: respect, truth, kindness, politeness and doing your best. Each value now has its own coloured band. Children and adults can nominate others to be awarded one of these bands. We are all trying to get one in each colour by the end of the year.



SPORTS

On Monday 15 October a well-fought football match took place between Sonning Common and St Mary's of Henley. Altogether there were five matches and in the end Sonning Common won!

Pupils from SCPS have been running in the schools' cross-country series. This time there are races for Years 1 to 6. We have over 75 members in our weekly before-school running club and many of them turned up for their first race ever. We were proud to bring home three golds, two silvers and three bronzes plus lots of team prizes.

In September we sent a strong team of Year 5 and 6 children to Didcot for the South Oxfordshire outdoor athletics competition. We won by more than 300 points over the second placed team. Becky Houghton and Callum Mead were the top two performers in the whole competition.



News from the pupils of Sonning Common Primary School (SCPS)



KITES KITCHEN

We've got a fantastic, new school dinner menu. On Tuesdays it's Theme Day which means you can have food from different countries. On Thursdays we have Pie Day and our favourite so far is definitely chicken and sweetcorn.

Yum!



STRANGER HELPED BY SCPS PUPILS

In October, two girls from Year 6 saw that an elderly lady had crashed her car into a tree. They rushed to call an ambulance and happily the lady is now recovering well at home.

MANDARIN LESSONS

Some pupils from Year 5 and 6 have been learning Mandarin with Mr Wu from Highdown School. The children who participate have said that they find it a fun and interesting language to learn.



Oliver!

Oliver! - the musical - is to be performed at Chiltern Edge School this year. Maz Baxter, head of drama and dance, is very excited about it.

"It features students from all years performing, creating sets, lighting and sound control, props, make-up and back stage. It really is a whole school event," she said.

"The standard of acting is really high this year, and there are some very technical dance routines involved. It should be a really special show."

The stars of the show are mainly from the GCSE drama course, apart from one year 9 student - Guillaume Gougeon - who has the star part of Oliver.

Performances are on 6, 7 and 8 December starting at 7pm. Tickets are available from the main school office.

Phone: 0118 972 1500.



MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS IT!

JUNIOR BOOK REVIEW

VILLAIN.NET: COUNCIL OF EVIL

By Andy Briggs (suitable for age 11+)



This book review was written by the Mouldy Cheese reading group - Becky Houghton, Tilly Lawson, Izzy Lusted, Oliver Matthews, Fred Newbold and Ellie Underwood in year 6 at Sonning Common Primary School.

This book is about a boy called Jake Hunter who clicks on a mysterious web link and turns into a dangerous super-villain. He downloads special powers, meets a criminal mastermind, and tries to buy a bomb to plant in the earth's core, to hold the world to ransom.

BECKY says: "Andy Briggs did a good job, but overall I didn't like it, and didn't finish it because it was too violent."

ELLIE says: "I didn't finish the book because it turned out to be too violent for my liking."

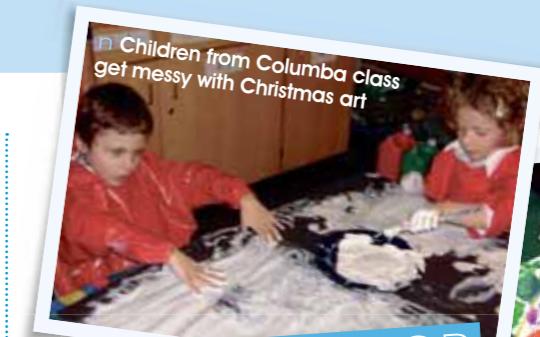
FRED says: "Andy Briggs has made good use of action and the words are gripping."

IZZY says: "I thought that the book was interesting to start with, but then it got very crazy and too many things were happening at once."

OLIVER says: "I personally thought the book was amazing, but there was a bit of violence so some people might not like it."

Tilly says: "It was quite a good book, but there was too much stuff going on at one time, and I didn't really like it."

Villain.net: Council of Evil is the first title in a series. There is a parallel series by Andy Briggs called, Hero.com. All can be borrowed from your local library. n



In Children from Columba class get messy with Christmas art



ALL WE WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

Pupils at Bishopswood Special School in the village have been thinking about their hopes for the festive season.

Here's what they said they were looking forward to most:

"Tasting Christmas biscuits".
(Jack)

"A noisy Christmas".
(David)

"Running in the snow".
(Spencer)

"Meeting Father Christmas".
(Alice)

"Hearing Christmas music".
(Dylan)

"Playing in the snow".
(Jamie)

"The crackers".
(Marcus)

"The presents".
(Oscar)

"Dressing up".
(Megan)

"Singing Christmas songs".
(Cameron)

From the Columba and Pegasus classes

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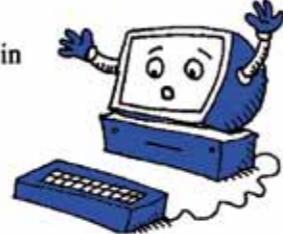
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Dec
Jan

FRIDAY 2 Nottakwire practice Village Hall 9.30am	SUNDAY 4 Sonning Common circle dancing group Christ the King Church Hall 3.30 - 5pm	WEDNESDAY 7 Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - AGM Peppard War Memorial Hall 7.15pm	THURSDAY 8 FISH - Pub lunch 11.30am
FRIDAY 9 Nottakwire practice Village Hall 9.30am	FRIDAY 9 British Legion - Tea dance Village Hall 2 - 4pm	THURSDAY 15 Sonning Common Women's Institute - Christmas surprise. Visitors welcome Village Hall 7.30pm	FRIDAY 16 Nottakwire dress rehearsal Village Hall 9.30am
SATURDAY 17 Nottakwire Christmas concert Village Hall 3pm	SATURDAY 17 South Chiltern Choral Society - A very English Christmas Chiltern Edge School 7.30pm	SUNDAY 18 Nottakwire Christmas concert Village Hall 3pm	SUNDAY 18 South Chiltern Choral Society - A very English Christmas Chiltern Edge School 2pm
MONDAY 19 Sonning Common Parish Council Village Hall 7.30pm	MONDAY 26 Sonning Common Society - Boxing Day walk Village Hall 10am	SUNDAY 1 Sonning Common circle dancing group Christ the King Church Hall 3.30 - 5pm	FRIDAY 6 British Legion - Tea dance Village Hall 2 - 4pm
TUESDAY 10 Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - Bulbs and beyond, by Richard Bisgrove Peppard War Memorial Hall 7.30pm	FRIDAY 13 Nottakwire practice Village Hall 9.45am	MONDAY 16 Sonning Common Parish Council Village Hall 7.30pm	THURSDAY 19 FISH - Pub lunch 11.30am
THURSDAY 19 Sonning Common Women's Institute - Colour me beautiful, by Liz Rock. Visitors welcome Village Hall 7.30pm	FRIDAY 20 British Legion - Tea dance Village Hall 2 - 4pm	FRIDAY 27 Nottakwire practice Village Hall 9.45am	

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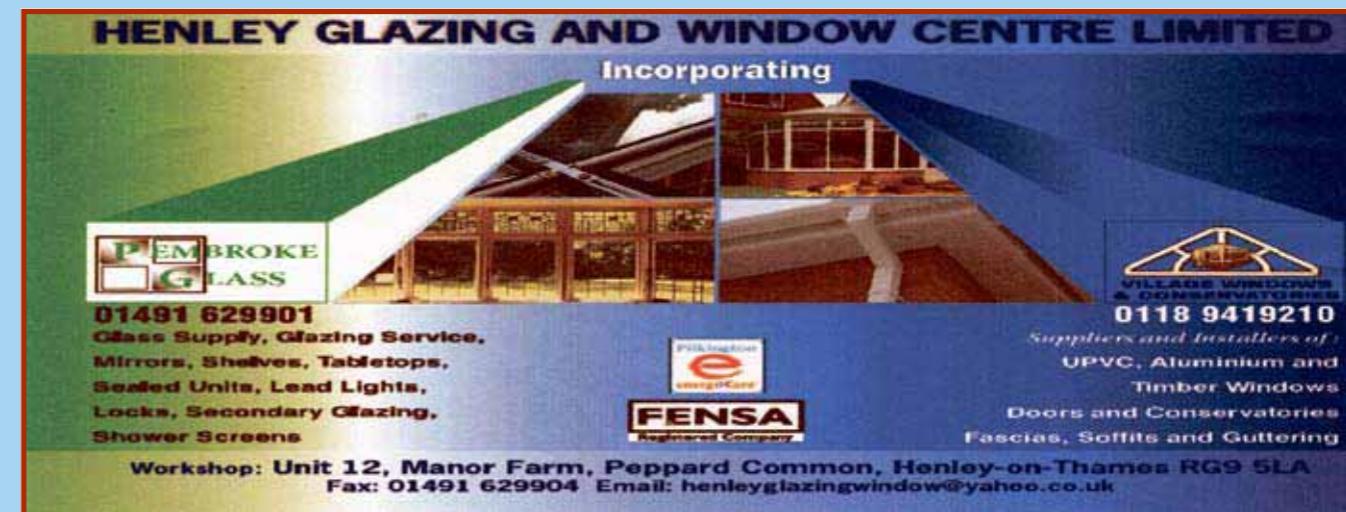
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